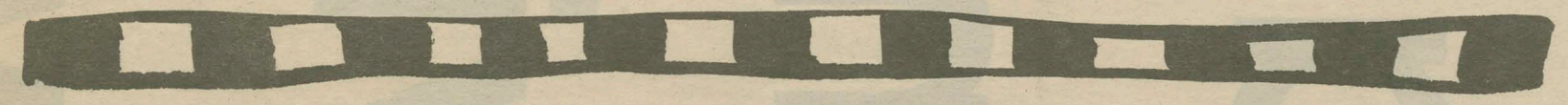




PLANET OF THE ARTS

ECCAD STUDENT PAPER



VOLUME 9 ISSUE 5 1994



an inter- view with Lars



On December 21st, 1993, Lars Kraemmer, a fourth year painting student, began a seven week *Retreat* in which he was enclosed in a light-tight 5'x 5' x 5' box. The first three weeks of this *Retreat* the box sat within the Artemesia Gallery and for the remaining four weeks, within Lars' Chinatown studio. His link to the 'outside world' and partner throughout the project was his close friend Wiktor Sandowicz, also a graduating painting student at E.C.C.A.D. On a rather wet and windy day about a week ago, i had the pleasure of interviewing Lars and Wiktor about their experiences surrounding this period of time. After a few hours of talking about the Retreat project, i realized that i could not possibly interpret what i had heard. For that reason i have decided to allow particles of our conversation to float freely on the page. Consider this a collage- interview.

Lars speaks:

"...This (project) was inevitable, given the circumstances, this had to happen. And I can only say that after the fact. I couldn't have said that before it happened. It is difficult to grasp what it is we are doing prior to the project and perhaps not always super healthy because if you get a very good idea of what you are doing you might not be so receptive to what this event might teach you."

i asked: 'Lars, how did you feel just before entering the box at the Artemesia Gallery?'

Lars responded: "It was a funny, funny moment. I didn't feel wholly excited or nervous. I felt really close to Wiktor then...we were incredibly close together. It was not like I paid alot of attention to too many people...I think we could have done without anybody around, really. It was almost like we were by ourselves."

i pondered: 'Lars, how did you feel about being away, about being in isolation?'



by
mackenzie
stroh



Lars: "I didn't really feel that, um, that I was in isolation because I was thinking about people and people were thinking about me. And it is not like I had disappeared...I didn't feel disconnected."

The Retreat project received media coverage from several different sources, including a local newspaper in Prince George, B.C..

An art instructor at a secondary school there informed two of her classes about the project and the students were so enthused about *the Retreat* that they began a correspondence with Lars and Wiktor.

A few of the students wrote personal letters expressing their questions, concerns and support.

Lars: "Although there has been a lot of different responses to the fact that we had media coverage, it initiated some beautiful connections with people that I wouldn't want to do without...and that can then linger to other stories, other events."

Mackenzie questions if it was difficult to complete the seven weeks in the box and Lars

answers:

"Thinking about it or focusing on it would make it very difficult; but, then focusing on what you have right here, now, this breath, this feeling, this sensation, then you don't have time to get bored or lonely or anxious, because there is no other time than this time..."

Me: 'Lars, did you hallucinate?'

Lars: "Yes, I did have some hallucinations. The first couple of days it seemed like black in there, but after a couple of weeks...two, three weeks, some little beams of light came across. Then later on, those lights carried a little image of a piece of furniture, people, a silhouette, still images. Later, when we were down here (in the studio), in the last two weeks, there were more vivid things going on...and powerful dreams...dreams became very important."

The last 49 minutes of the 49th day, Lars spent in silence. One minute to commemorate every day he spent in the box. Close friends and loved ones awaited him outside. I asked Lars what it was like to see the light again.

Lars: "I could see right away.

That was a very shocking moment. The first thing I saw was Wiktor's face...it was really wild. I could only see things in, um, exclusively Wiktor's face, exclusively the next face and so on. For the first little while I couldn't see the whole thing 'cause everything was so intense. And then I walked next door and after awhile Wiktor gave me a haircut and I saw one of his paintings, and it was like it was exhibiting all the layers, all the history of the painting stood clear to me, you know, like silk screens, it was deep, it the most amazing experience of a painting. It was very, very powerful."

Me: 'Lars, how do you feel you have changed?'

Lars: "I feel that I am more, I dare to be more aware of myself than I was before."

From what I heard and saw, *the Retreat* transcended into the realm of the spiritual. The experience for Lars of being in the box and for Wiktor of being his main-stay, became a stepping stone to new experiences. It is all a part of the process (nothing like a little cliché to wrap things up). I give my sincere thanks to Lars Kraemmer and Wiktor Sandowicz for the inspiration and for their generosity.

Be True To Your School

You may remember how not so very long ago, the administration made an announcement. It made an announcement that it was considering, as a cost cutting measure, eliminating an entire program from this college. Do you remember that? So you remember how it created an atmosphere of basic fear and paranoia that coated the actions of teachers and slowed the work of students who were preoccupied with whether their program would exist next year? In my class we were devoting long chunks of time to sitting around and talking about the whole situation. One teacher told me that in meetings between faculty and administration, that administration was asking the staff for ideas, "input" if you will, on how they thought the cuts should be made. She made this analogy: "OK, so you have ten fingers. Of all your fingers, which one would you feel most comfortable losing? How about this one? You don't use it so much, do you?" Faculty and staff eyed each other like Thanksgiving hens. Which of them would still be here next year? Along with this, the college's Outreach program was quietly axed, the school store was closed, part-time studies was drastically scaled back, and the administration wants to propose that for next year, our access hours be cut back so that the school closes at midnight on weekdays and 10 pm on weekends. Can you do your work during these hours? On top of this, we are all facing dramatic hikes in tuition, making the school, in my opinion, inaccessible to precisely the people who need it most. Artists. Artists, as the cliché goes, don't have lots of cash. So is this school going to turn into a beehive of boho yuppies who drive their dads' convertibles and minivans? Here's the punchline to this long and sordid joke. During all of this talk of restraint and deficit, there was not one mention, to my knowledge, of the administration taking any cuts. Now let's put this straight. To my way of thinking, the administration of any institution are the people responsible for the smooth running of that institution's financial affairs. The students and faculty aren't. Now, this year a deficit of \$400,000 springs out of the fog, like a bogeyman (or the cry of P.T. Barnum). Here, like everywhere else, everyone is gripped by deficit inspired fear. "We must restrain ourselves! There's a deficit!" Does anyone else other than me think that this is basically a bogus scenario? Shall we call it cooked up? Does anyone believe that the bill for this deficit which has been brought on basically by bad management, is now being passed to the student body to pay for? I have a suggestion. Alan Barkley, the president of this college costs us all somewhere between \$130,000-\$150,000 per year. His contract, at the end of this year, is coming up for renewal. I say don't renew it and save us the money. Nothing personal against Alan. He's a splendid fellow, but these are times of restraint. Someone has to go. Maurice Yacowar, another person against whom I have nothing against, has demonstrated quite admirably that the positions of Dean and President are quite easily combined. He covered for Alan's sabbatical very well. Mind you, I know this was a lot of extra work for Maurice. But hard work must be done. These are times of deficit. Noses must be put to the grindstone. So there, in a nutshell is my proposal. I think it's a modest one. Have a good summer everybody. And in the words of the great Brian Wilson, be true to your school. Rah Rah Rah. Sis Boom Bah.

Love, Terry Dawes

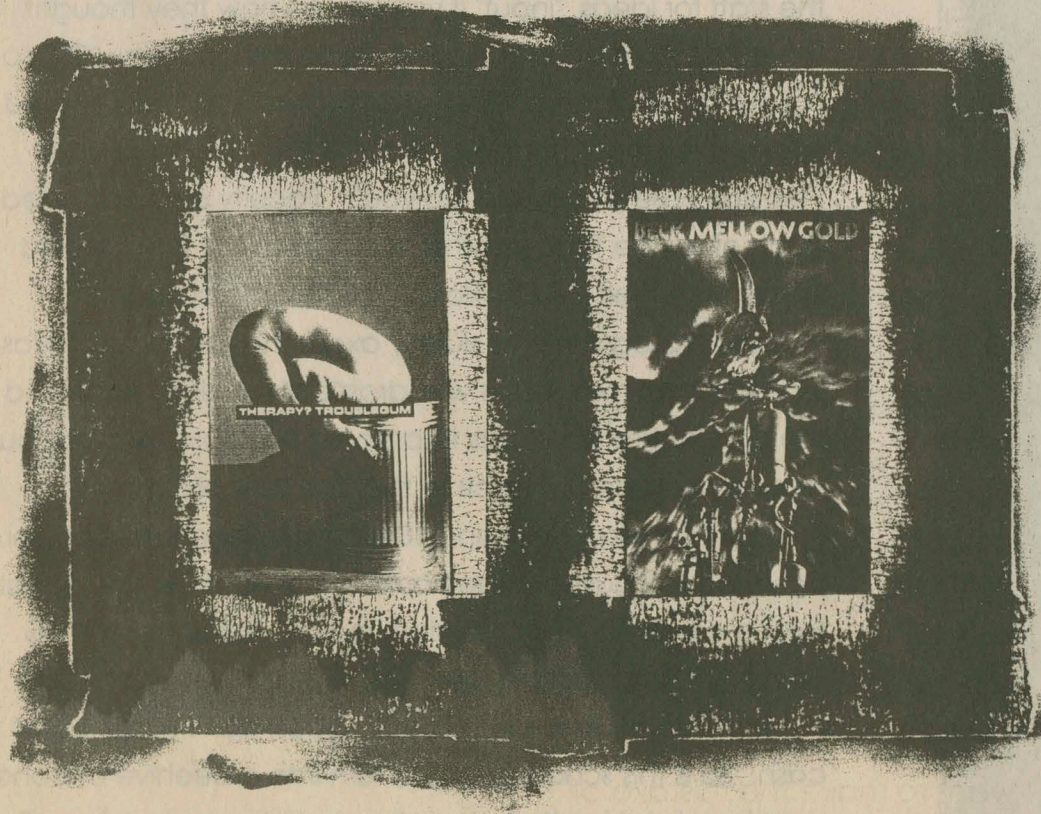


Cover by ADAD

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music



St. Johnny
Speed is Dreaming
Geffen

reviewed by Owen Falkiner

I've been listening to this tape over and over, trying to find something to say about it because I like it, but I guess what I've found is that they don't really contribute anything new. The music is remarkably similar to that of Sonic Youth—i.e.: feedback, distortion, wall of noise ballyhoo, and all that stuff (like a million other "new" bands).

What they do contribute are good songs. They are pretty noisy at times, but there's nothing thoroughly abrasive enough to hurt radio-friendly ears. The band could benefit by taking a rest from the constant strumming and let the songs breathe a little. A couple of songs do stand out by slowing it down a bit and adding a little more aural variety.

One notable thing is the extremely barren (by today's standards) tape sleeve. There's one group photo inside and a short list of credits, not even any thank you's.

I give up...everything is beautiful.

Beck
Mellow Gold
Geffen Records

When I first heard "Loser" I thought, 'This is the new teen anthem for 1994'. Perhaps. But the mainstream may not be ready for Beck just yet. The majority of the songs are perfectly radio un-friendly, ranging from the demonic ranting of "Motherf***er" to what seemed like a twisted, childhood, Raffi flashback on "Pay No Mind(Snoozer)". A few of the songs resemble some of the more chaotic Sebadoh stuff while others are almost blissfully sweet ("Blackhole" and "Nitemare Hippy Girl") and would fit snugly on the airwaves.

Despite forced comparisons, the best thing about *Mellow Gold* is that it truly is something different from the present major-label-sounds-like-this-Seattle-band-let's-make-a-million-bucks kind of thing. It's more like a pie in the majors' faces, a practical joke for the rest of us to giggle at. Beck has garbled together every metaphor imaginable to create *Mellow Gold* and he comes out of it looking more like a genius than a flake. The world may not be ready for Beck, but the second you realise you're just another loser you'll dig this album.

reviewed by Nickie Senger

Mark Lanegan
Whiskey for the Holy Ghost
Sub Pop/Cargo

reviewed by Owen Falkiner

If you can get past the fact that Mark Lanegan sings way too much like Jim Morrison, you will surely enjoy the querulous balladry captured in these recordings. In collaboration with other fashionable music industry personalities like Tad Doyle and J. Mascis, Mr. Lanegan uses this side project to ponder more personal themes than he might as the Screaming Tees frontman. As songwriter, arranger and producer (with the help of Mike Johnson) Lanegan does an exceptional job of using musical sounds to create vivid acoustic imagery. The woeful crooning will teleport you directly to some dusty, forgotten nowhere town, where men are men and the sheep are afraid. He jingles when he jangles but don't get too excited, you'll spoil the mood. The going is mostly slow and somber, so relax and sip that whiskey.

The Lowest of the Low
Hallucigenia
A&M

reviewed by Owen Falkiner

Three years between recordings is a sizable gap, and it can be expected that over time a band's sound will change, and hopefully even improve. Well, three years have passed since TLOTL recorded their last album, and sure enough the sound has changed. The guitars are louder and raunchier, but the vocal and writing styles remain intact.

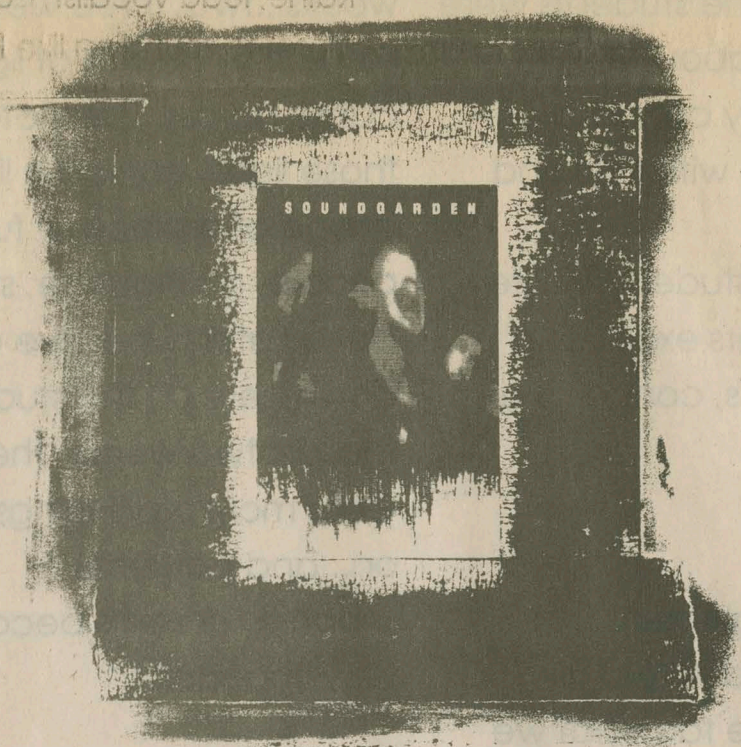
To those who don't understand the band's sense of humour and parody the updated TLOTL would smell suspiciously like a sell-out. As a group who once-upon-a-time composed happy sing-songs, you may be confused to find them with a new album entitled *Hallucigenia* with songs about "Eating the Rich" and "...doing too much acid". I truly feel sorry for anyone who takes these guys seriously. I see them as a hopping bar band who is keeping up with today's current trends, and laughing at them at the same time.

Soundgarden
Superunknown
A&M

This latest release from Soundgarden doesn't hold any surprises for the listener. It has a sound that is very similar to Badmotorfinger and is unmistakably theirs. That's not to say that *Superunknown* isn't worth hearing. On the contrary, this album's potent turbulence matches the languid buzzing almost perfectly, and a bit of uncharacteristic diversity is evident in Ben Shepherd's "Half", which sounds more like a Jane's Addiction tune.

I guess it's like this, if you're already a Soundgarden fan and groove to their guitar heavy sounds you've probably already picked this one up and relish it's existence. But if you've never really liked their stuff, chances are this one won't change your mind.

reviewed by Nickie Senger



reviews

Therapy?
Troublegum
A&M

On the heels of their EP *Hats Off to the Insane*, *Therapy?* presents us with a full length token of their metal-edged, angst-filled, punk rock. *Troublegum* is brimming with weighty, guitar cacophony and abrasive vocals. Songs like "Screamager" (previously released) and "Die Laughing" have a slick togetherness that makes up for the borderline cheese of "Unbeliever" and "Femtex". Actually, most of the lyrics are a little goofy when you think about them. It's hard to believe someone can have so much negative energy that they "know how Jeffery Dahmer feels". Apart from the lyrical content, the music is powerful and about as soothing as a sandpaper rubdown, and y'know, sometimes that can feel pretty darned good.

reviewed by Nickie Senger

What does it take to be a great Canadian rock band?

I had one of those rare inspirational moments on Thursday, April 15th at the Town Pump while watching two amazing bands play. What I felt was a combination of awe and pride for a pair of bands that had better get somewhere or the whole music industry is screwed. I was lucky enough to have met the opening band, **Our Lady Peace**, before they played with **I Mother Earth**, two of the craziest names on one bill in a long time. I spoke with the four guys in the band and was really impressed with their easy-going, yet dedicated conversation. We spoke in depth about their debut album on Sony/Epic, called *Naveed*, and they were quite proud of the work they had done with producer Arnold Lanni. Recorded in the space of three months, these guys have managed to keep an unspoken tradition amongst Canadian bands alive with eleven solid songs.

No words can truly describe the passionate vocals captured on this disc. Citing Chandra and Sinead as inspiring influences; Raine, lead vocalist, comes much closer to sounding like Burton Cummings and the great Gord Downie on these great rock cuts. If it's spirited singing that leads a young band to success, these guys have no worries. Go out and buy the disc and take a good listen to

the way the songs have been written. The music has many solid hooks that combine with the vocals to give you a powerful package. I listened to this once because I had to, then twice more the same day because it simply rocks. Forget about Glass Tiger, Platinum Blonde, and Honeymoon Suite; these four lads offer you everything an all-Canadian rock fan should expect.

I asked them what they thought of a Canadian sound, and they responded that although they are not flag-waving Nationalists, they are proud of Canadian music and the influence it has had on the sounds they make. It is hard for a rock band coming out of Canada to deny the music of Neil Young, the Guess Who, and the Tragically Hip. Good Rock is good rock, no matter where the people who make it are from.

Of course I was impressed with the fact that even though Our Lady Peace are on one of the richer major labels, they are still real people. It was cool talking to guys who believe in taking the extra time to write good songs, and then go out and support them on tour with enthusiastic playing. Although Raine was confined to a stool on stage due to an ankle injury, Our Lady Peace surprised the Town Pump, and did more than just warm up the crowd for the headliners. They played their album with heart and got more than a few people shaking their booties. I Mother Earth should do themselves a big favour and take these guys everywhere with them, because they'll have the best seats in the house while Our Lady Peace only gets better.

Just to say a few words about the amazing show I Mother Earth put on would be a tease, so here goes. If you missed it, you missed big time. Take equal parts Santana, American neo-funk, and UK shoegazer and you get some pretty fabulous playing. These guys were pros at taking you through all the colours of the heavy rock rainbow; innovating in a way that might have been wasted on those too drunk to give a fuck. Another must see when they come back. Buy the disc and count the days until you too are one of the lucky ones.

I'm not really interested in being cynical about the chances of Our Lady Peace on the American scene. Becoming jaded is a handicap, and I would rather see these guys make it, than a lot of other shit bands who think they rule just because they can duplicate the riff of the month with ease. I don't want to make the mistake of thinking that just because the American music scene is still pretty ignorant to a lot of great Canadian music, that we can't eventually, with the help of bands like Our Lady Peace, break down the barrier and flood them with some of the best tunes they have ever heard. Get off your apathetic butts and get behind something worth supporting: BUY CANADIAN MUSIC, BECAUSE IT ROCKS!

by
Christopher D. Spelay

music west festival

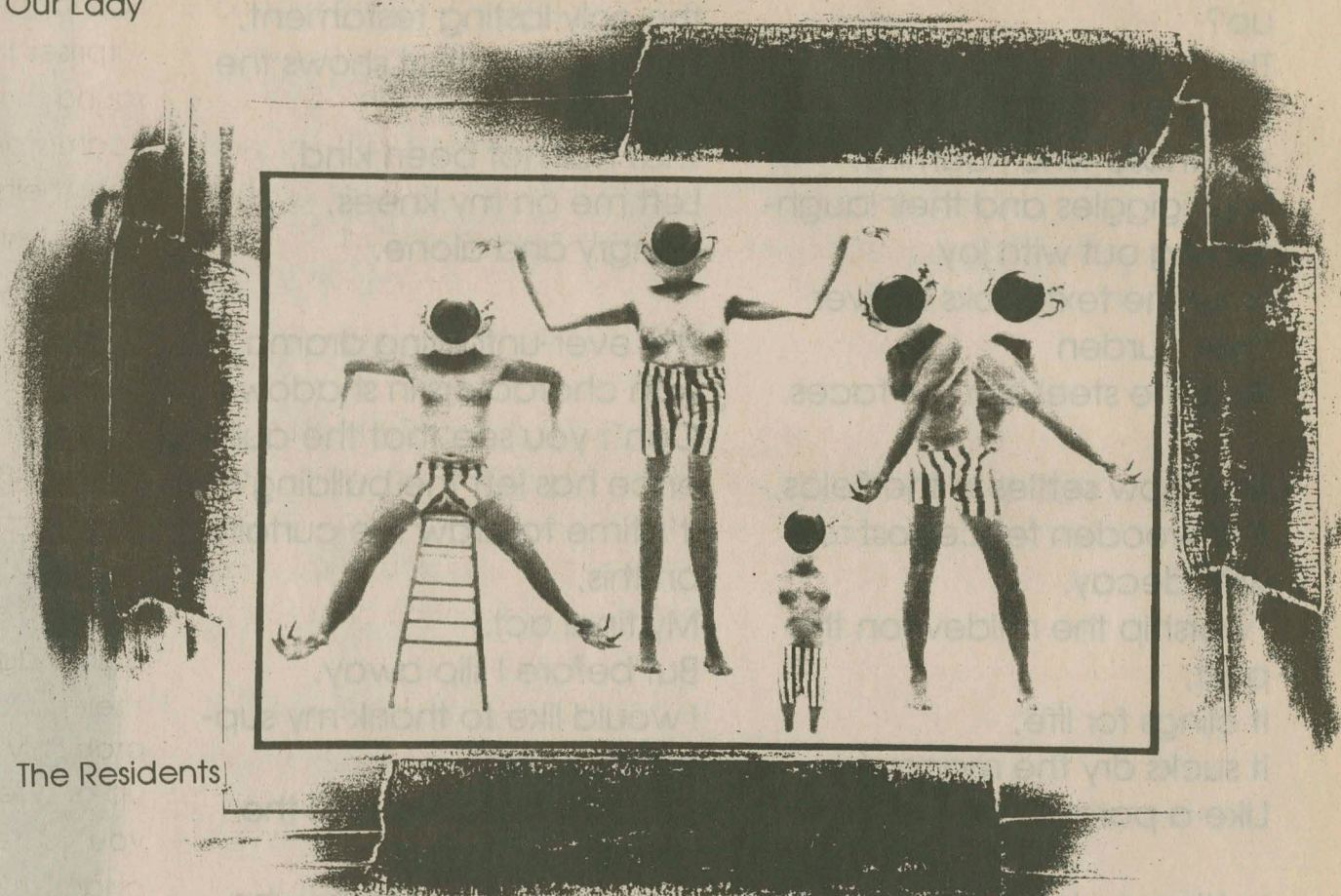
Music West '94 is coming our way once again. This year the concert festival will be running May 12-15. Wristbands are now available at Ticket Masters for \$35 (well worth it) and give you virtually unlimited entrance to any of the number of gigs happening during the event. There will be more than 200 bands at 20 clubs over four nights, includ-

ing Jello Biafra, Mystery Machine, Moist, 13 Engines, Cherry Poppin' Daddies, Forbidden Dimension, BNU, Bum and of course many more. Also slated to take place during Music West is the Slam City Jam, a National Skateboarding Association competition accompanied by live bands like NoMeansNo,

Facepuller, Superconductor, Malhavoc, Huevos Rancheros, and more. (Free with wristband, \$15 for one-day pass without wristband) In addition to all this excitement, The Music Show (another part of Music West) takes place on May 14 & 15. This little shindig hosts a plethora of exhibits and tidbits. Drum (with Chad Smith of *Chili*

Pepper fame), keyboard, guitar, sampling, and recording workshops will take place on Saturday as well as demonstrations by Thomas Dolby and (designers take note) tips on independent CD production. On Sunday, along with various workshops and clinics, The Residents *Freak Show*, an interactive CD ROM carnival will be in

action. (Music Show will cost \$10 whether you have a wristband or not.) And finally, underlying the whole thing, is the Music West Conference which will show all the little music people what it takes to be big music people, through panel discussions, workshops, and schmoozing.



The Residents

No Man Is A Failure Who Has Friends

My life,
And how it relates to yours.
I know not what is real,
In this world we live in.

How can I say what I feel?
This mask that I wear is all too
comfortable,
And yet it is wearing thin.
The blinding white light
Is beginning to crack
through.
I do not want to blow you
away,
But the fragments of the inner
me,
They burst forth from the
cage.

They say that every life af-
fects so many other lives,
And yet I feel unwanted.
Can I relate to you in a way
that will work?
Will I destroy myself through
twisted self expression?
Why can these things not be
simple?

I can smile,
I can talk,
And I think that I can feel,
But I am not alive.
This inner cavity consumes
the soul,
The spirit is in bondage
And the shine is covered in
the confusion.

I can remember my thoughts
of yesterday:
The peacefulness and the
sounds,
The smiles and the faces...
Why did we have to grow
up?
The children at the play-
ground
Are those who I admire,
Their giggles and their laugh-
ter ring out with joy.
Now the textbooks deliver
their burden
And the steel is in our faces.

The snow settles in the fields,
The wooden fencepost rots
with decay.
I worship the mildew on the
post,
It clings for life,
It sucks dry the marrow
Like a parasite on the bone.

Letting go is the most painful
experience that we have yet
shared;
The liberation comes too
slowly
For the bones in my closet.
My scars are the wounds
That remind me of my char-
acter,

Remind me of patterns un-
checked,
Remind me of the cycles un-
broken.

Like a tattoo on the soul,
An ink that drains blackness
from my heart.

How can we possibly create
something special,
When we're both so fucked
up?
Like a blind man shopping for
a pair of glasses,
There is no use in this mad-
man's campaign.

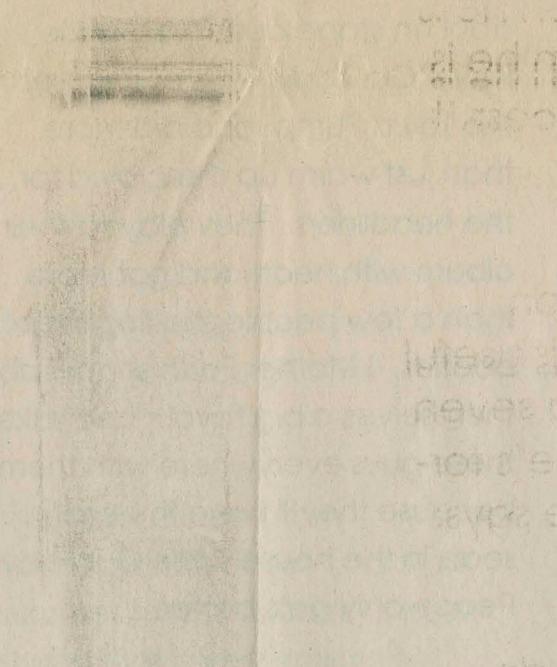
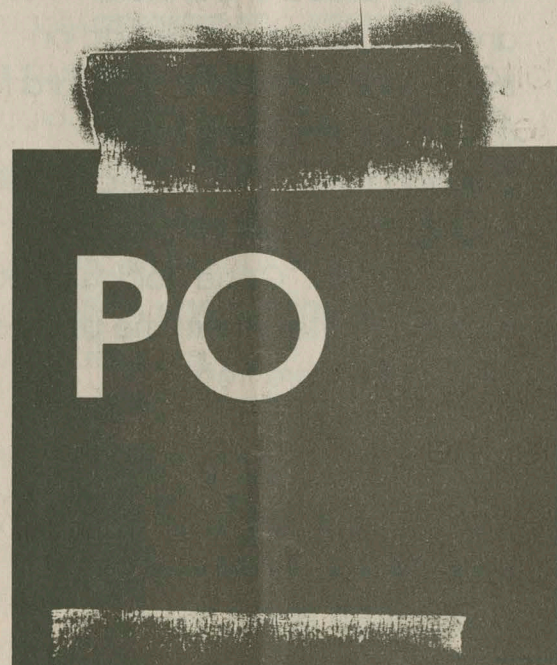
Maybe one day it could work,
And we could hold hands
And tell stories.
Maybe one day, we could
leave the new damage be-
hind
And begin again.
Maybe...maybe not.

I don't know why I'm trying to
do this,
Maybe it's because you're all
that I've got.
With nothing else to lose,
Sometimes the pain feels like
a gift;
A gift to the senses of the mal-
nourished,
Like a beggar given a
bottlecap-
Anything small and metal
could be a coin.

The palms of my hands are
baking in the sun,
My hands have been
stretched out so long.
The wrinkles on the skin are
the only lasting testament,
The only sign that shows the
time
That has not been kind.
Left me on my knees,
Hungry and alone.

This ever-unfolding drama,
with characters in shadow,
Can't you see that the audi-
ence has left the building?
It's time to draw the curtains
on this,
My final act.
But before I slip away,
I would like to thank my sup-
porting cast:
The non-believers and the
critics,
The friends and family who
didn't believe in me
When I didn't believe in my-
self,
To you I can say thank-you
As I blow out the candles.

by Alastair Wood



I sit and watch you smoke
And it seems at this point
The calculated, self-damag-
ing act
Of a man betrayed.

The iron clad warrior
I imagined in my youth
Sits ashen and disillusioned
Before me.

My emotions swell and sub-
side
Within me.
A myriad of hollow words
Spring to mind, and are at
once...
Discarded.

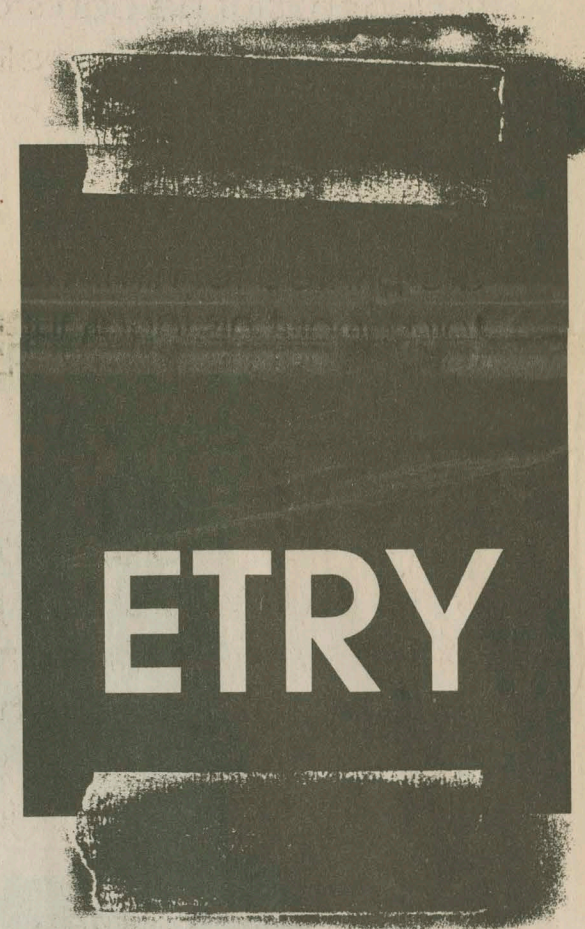
There's a silver lining in every...
Well, you know.

I contemplate the thick to-
bacco fog around me
And despsair.
With every difficult breath you
draw
Tears swell, I cannot speak.
The rules will not let me.
I feel that I will burst.

I leave with a smile and firm
handshake.

I live and regret this silence.

by Michael Doyle



The Dream Of The Ordinary Prince

the ordinary princess,
while buttering
her toast,
dreamt the dream
of the ordinary prince,

who wasn't very ordinary
and
neither
is she.

Karen Campbell

"the importance of being joe"

translated from persian by mohammad
(dedicated to abass and zohreh)

for his neighbours, joe is only a neighbour. for his wife, only a husband. and for every body else, he is only joe. you can see him on the street. you can call him to help you finish landscaping your garden. joe can landscape your garden. for taking your groceries home, you can hire joe to carry the bags and follow you. for having the house painted, you can hire joe to do it for you.

you can scream at him, but he keeps quiet. you can bitch at him, but he keeps quiet. you can feed him the old leftovers, he eats it, and keeps quiet. you think of him as a sheep. he thinks of you as a wolf.

joe is a quiet man. on the street, he quietly stares at the signs. in the sports arena, he quietly screams. in mourning, he quietly cries. at home, if there is something for dinner, he sits and quietly eats. and if not, he quietly beats up his wife.

joe is happy. he eats toast and coffee for dinner, as well as for lunch, but he can start the day without breakfast. joe believes that jam is really good for you, and believes that these days good jam is hard to find.

joe doesn't like the news. he doesn't know that the books are printed for him. he only looks at the images. when he is told about his ignorance, he only says : "really?" when he is told that "there is a lot happening in the world," he doesn't panic.

in joe's household, no one is unemployed. his older son works in a metal shop. joe is happy that his son's job is useful for the society. his younger son sells lottery tickets in a seven eleven. joe is happy that his son's job involves people's fortune. his youngest son breaks windows of houses. joe says: "this is another type of job," and he beats him up.

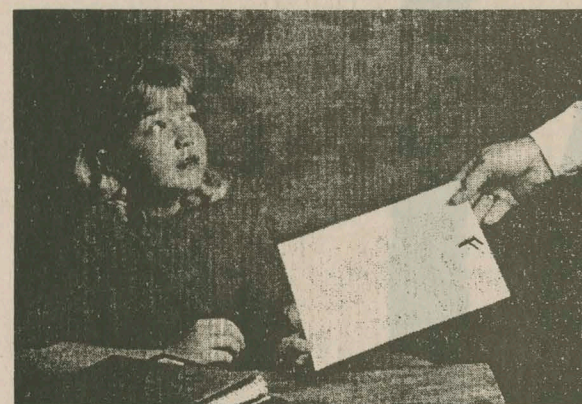
joe has two daughters. one of them is old enough to do anything. the other one is young enough to do nothing. he plans to find good husbands for them. so does joe's wife. but the right guy always falls in love with daughters of their neighbours.

once, joe got mad. he screamed in the middle of the street. in the hospital, in the police station and in the neighbourhood, there was a rumour that his nervous breakdown was because of the hot weather. joe wants to do it again on a winter day.

joe lives in a big city. first, he slept on the street, behind his hot dog vending machine. then, in the store where he found a job. then he got married. and now, he sleeps in a small apartment.

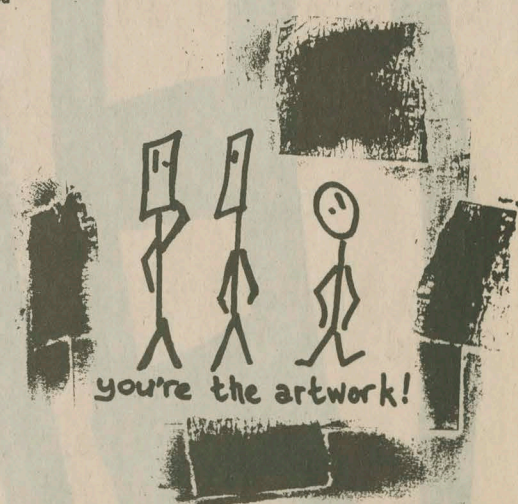
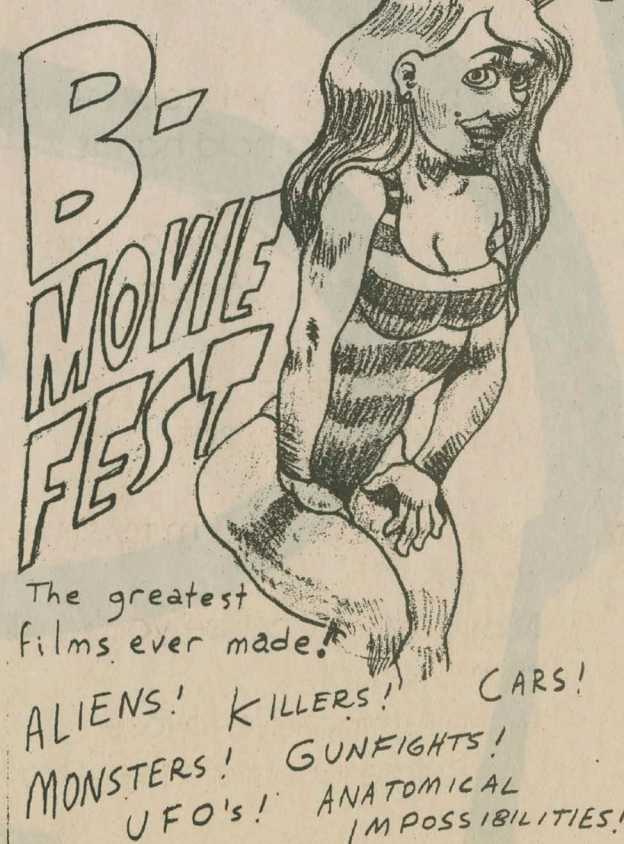
when joe tells his life stories, the children get excited and wish for the same fate. their mother feeds them dinner and sends them to bed. she often gets angry and keeps telling joe: "what should i expect, you come from a small town." joe asks: "aren't you yourself from a small town?" she answers: "never, my dad was."

Editorial and layout responsibilities for this issue were somewhat reluctantly taken on by Nickie Senger. To those who helped, thank you. To those who didn't, I wave my private parts at your auntie. I hope everyone has a beautifully hot, money-making summer. Use your sunscreen and we'll see you next year. BYE-BYE!



BAD GRADES: from a teacher doesn't mean the teacher hates you

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